

Silo gets all steamed up about baseball



Silo Theatre has hit a home-run with its latest offering, *Take Me Out*, based on Richard Greenberg's award-winning play that explores the torment of male sexuality in the high stakes game of professional sport.

The story focuses on the conflict between the players of a major league baseball team when its star player, Darren Lemming (Fasitua Amosa), outs himself to his team mates.

The tension moves up a gear when the team recruits rookie pitcher Shane Mugitt (Edwin Wright), a young man with a southern drawl who throws a mean fastball.

It's not long before Mungitt reveals his true colours, spewing out racial and homophobic slurs that begin to unravel the very workings of the team both on and off the field.

Following on from last year's smash hit *The Boys in the Band*, director Shane Boshier has succeeded in bringing the angst of

Play
Take Me Out
Until September 23
Silo Theatre
Directed by Shane Boshier
Review by Marc Checkley

the locker room to the New Zealand stage.

Boshier has assembled a fine team of male actors who envelop Greenberg's characters with vigour.

By far the most electric performance comes from Wright whose portrayal of stammering redneck Mugitt, reveals xenophobic undercurrents that still run deep in the sporting world.

All-round nice guy Kippy Sunderstrom (Craig Hall) and Lemming's baseball-virgin business manager Mason "Mars" Marzac (Jeff Szusterman) provide light relief in a series of narrative monologues.

They give an entertaining insight to the team's eclectic

characters and the beguile of baseball.

Marzac's side plot discovers the wonders of centrefield from the point of view of a complete outsider.

This is perfect for a crowd mostly uneducated to the subtleties of this summer pastime.

The audience gains an appreciation for the thick atmosphere of Yankee Stadium at the top of the ninth with two outs and bases loaded.

Amosa on his own failed to ignite the stage but when joined by his team mates was able to pull off the cocky if somewhat naive celebrity sportsman coming to terms with himself and the ironies of self-disclosure.

The four leads are complemented by newcomers Jarod Rawiri, Nathan Whitaker, Jerome Matthews and Andy Wong.

Along with Paul Barrett as the hard-nosed team coach and a strong performance by Mark

Ruka as Lemming's staunchly religious best friend Davey Battle.

This play does not just focus on the issues of sexual bigotry but unearths the underlying racial prejudices of uneducated, swarthy men.

Some scenes cut right to the bone, such as Mugitt's trailer trash diatribe on how black people were "only two fifths human and deserved to die".

This play delves into the journeys of the marginalised and shows how the "equal" playing field of sport is far from level.

Audiences will gain a deeper understanding of sporting intricacies and will be forced to exploring their own panoptic fantasies.

Voyeuristically played out in the team's locker room, *Take Me Out* is an intense study of raw-masculinity, pride, bigotry and insecurities, washed with the sweat and lather of America's favourite game.

Without Feathers a welcome change of tune



The Stills have followed up their angst-ridden debut album, *Logic Will Break Your Heart*, with the surprisingly upbeat *Without Feathers*.

The band's change of musical disposition for what they call their "sophomore" album will have many wondering; what happened in the interim to bring about such a turnaround?

Gone is the doom, gloom and threatening bass lines, and in comes a happier pop-pier beat that leads to a genuinely nice listening experience.

The change of tact has been attributed to drummer Dave Hamelin's stint as lead guitarist; this luckily also coincides with

Music
Without Feathers
The Stills
In Stores now
Review by John Edwards

vocalist Tim Fletcher offering less of his bitter city attitude to the album and as a result *Without Feathers* becomes less about the depressing experience of Montreal (the band's home town) and more about the smaller things in life.

The Stills use their song's titles to speak for themselves with respect to content this time around. As such *Oh Shoplifter* and *Helicopter* in particular are

playful tunes that experiment well with percussion to create a feeling of outdoorsy-ness (if that's the right word) and that in itself makes the songs feel more upbeat than some of Fletcher's lyrics let on.

There is, at times, a noticeable divide between the "ditty" like music and Fletcher's still down-cast vocals but the repeatedly clever use of the piano by new keyboardist Liam O'Neill in many of the tunes does a lot to make sure that this divide does not seem too odd.

What all this told me was that The Stills are still a little depressed but things are definitely on the up.

If you get the chance give, *Halo The Harpoons*, *It Takes Time* and *In The Beginning* a few minutes of your time. If you are not in a depressed state of mind and do not wish to be, ignore the lyrics and you will still hear something you like.

The Stills, rather than play it safe by producing again what has worked in the past, have tweaked their previous formula for success and have come up with an album just as good if not better than their first.

Although it is not the complete listening experience there is enough to warrant multiple re-listens and in the long run that must be a good thing.

What's on

cinema

The Wrong Man (Lucky Number Slevin)
Cinemas nationwide
Opens August 31

Set in the mean streets of New York, it follows Slevin (Hartnett) who is mistaken for a wanted man by the crime bosses of the city.
Starring Josh Hartnett, Stanley Tucci, Ben Kingsley, Bruce Willis, Morgan Freeman and Lucy Liu.



Friends with Money
Cinemas nationwide
Opens August 31

The tale of four West Coast, life-long friends, who have achieved a level of comfort in their lives and have now settled into a life of designer clothes, charity events, and caring for the men (and offspring) in their lives.
Starring Jennifer Aniston, Catherine Kenner, Frances McDormand, Joan Cusak, Jason Isaacs.

Silent Hill
Cinemas nationwide
Opens August 31

The eerie and deserted town of Silent Hill draws a young mother desperate to find a cure for her only child's illness.

Starring Radha Mitchell, Jodell Ferland and Sean Bean.

events

Burn the Floor
Floorplay
ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre
September 6-8

Six years after its world premiere, and playing to more than 3 million people in 93 cities, the original dance production of *Burn the Floor Floorplay*, will bring its breathtaking show to the ASB Theatre.



Pasifika Media: Our Future
Pacific Islands Media Association
Conference, AUT
September 22-23

The consolidation of Niu FM, the development of new Pacific Islands television content and the proliferation of web-based news services pose key questions on the future of Pacific media.

theatre

Flip the Script
Limelight, Aotea Centre
September 1 & October 6

Young professional actors rehearse the student scripts all day with a professional director and dramaturge. They are performed from 9pm and the audience chooses the best - the New Zealand Idol of script writing!

The Blonde, The Brunette and The Vengeful Redhead
Maidment Theatre, Auckland
August 24 - September 16

Kerry Fox is in New Zealand for this hilarious show about how the world is turned upside down in a series of funny events.
Tickets from Maidment Theatre, cost \$30-\$49.

exhibitions

Bruce Hunt: Trail of Dreams
Ferner Gallery, Parnell
July 25 - September 13

A landscape painter since 1983, Bruce Hunt is displaying his work of isolated locations such as the Mackenzie Basin, North Otago and the West Coast of Northland. Admission is free.

The Vikings are Coming
Auckland Museum
July 21 - October 8

The culture, achievements and inventions of the Vikings are on display at the Auckland Museum, with highlights of the great Viking ships and the weapons of war.